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Leonine is a language spoken by people who have taken the Lion morph, following the spread of the Neo-Mutant virus. The main lexical base is Japanese, but a large amount of Chinese, Romance and Germanic roots and untraceable new words have made it into the vocabulary. The language is also known as "Leonian".

File:Flag-Leonine.png	
Leonine ***Reoni***	
Pronounced:	/ɾeoni/
Spoken:	Leonine
Writing system:	Latin
Genealogy:	Japonic Japanese (creole) Neo-Mutant Feline
Typology	
Morphological type:	Fusional and agglutinative
Morphosyntactic alignment:	Theme-based alignment (similar to Austronesian alignment)
Basic word order:	SOV
Credits	
Creator:	User:Madbrain

History

The Neo-Mutant virus, after spreading through humans, turned them into various "morphs". People with similar morphs tended to congregate together, and ended up creating new languages starting from creoles based on the various human languages they spoke. Japanese was a particularly important source, forming the base for all the

Feline Neo-Mutant varieties. The Feline languages are characterized by their use of supra-segmental phonetic distinctions (length, tone, accent, etc) as a basis for their grammatical inflections.

Phonology

Consonants

The consonants in Leonine follow the rough structure of Japanese and Indo-European languages.

	Labial	Dental	Apical	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stop	/p b/ "p b"	/t d/ "t d"			/k g/ "k g"		
Affricate		/ts dz/ "ts dz"		/tʃ dʒ/ "ch dj"			
Fricative	/f v/ "f v"	/s z/ "s z"		/ʃ ʒ/ "sh j"			/h/ "h"
Nasal	/m/ "m"	/n/ "n"			/ŋ/ "ng"	/ɴ/ "nr"	
Liquid	/w/ "w"	/l/ "l"	/ɾ/ "r"	/j/ "y"			

Non-initial consonants can also be long (written as pp, tt, kk, tts, cch, ssh etc). When "r" is lengthened, it becomes an apical lateral flap [ɺː].

Vowels

Short vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	/i/ "i"	/ɨ$^{\beta}$/ "u"	/u/ "û, uh"
Mid	/e~ɛ/ "e"		/o~ɔ/ "o"

Open	/a/ "a"	/ɑˤ/ "â, ah"

Long vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	/iː/ "ii"	/+ᵝː/ "uu"	/uː/ "ûû, uuh"
Mid	/eː/ "ei, ee"		/oː/ "ou, oo"
Open	/aː/ "aa"		/ɑˤː/ "ao, ââ"

Nasal vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	/˜ ː/ "in"	/˜ ᵝː/ "un"	/˜ ː/ "ûn, uhn"
Mid	/˜ ː/ "en"		/˜ ː/ "on"
Open	/ãː/ "an"		/˜ ː/ "ân, aon"

Diphthong

	Front
Open to close	/aj/ "ai"

The "ai" diphthong acts as a long vowel for rhythm purposes (it is bi-moraic).

Tones

Leonine uses tone strictly as a grammatical process. Only a few syllables are marked for tone, which spreads to adjacent syllables.

Name	Spelling	IPA	Contour	Use in Nouns	Use in Verbs
Plain	a	(˧ ˩ etc)	Very variable, depends on intonation	Non-theme non-qualified nouns	3rd person present
High (final)	...á	...˧˥	High last syllable	Theme and qualified nouns	3rd person past
High (right-spreading)	á...	˧˥˧˥...	High first syllable, spreads to whole word	Implicit possessive	Imperative (2nd person)
Dipping	ä	˨˩˧	Falls low and rises, similar to Mandarin 3rd tone	(never used)	1st person present
Dipping + High	ä...á	˨˩˧...˧˥	Initial dipping tone + high tone on final syllable	(never used)	1st person past
Falling	à	˥˩	Falls from high to low (like Mandarin 4th tone)	(never used)	2st person present
Falling + High	à...á	˥˩...˧˥	Initial falling tone + high tone on final syllable	(never used)	2st person past

The final high tone on theme/qualified nouns is not written. Instead, when the noun not the theme and isn't qualified but the context implies that it should, the next word is written with an initial capital letter.

Verbal tones are mobile: generally the final high tone moves to the very end of a verb phrase. For instance, *Mitá me.* ("He saw me") is really pronounced *Mita mé.*. The dipping and falling tones also move to the end of the verb phrase when a final high tone isn't also present. When both a dipping or falling and a final high tone are present, and the verb is short and doesn't have any object pronouns or auxiliary verbs, the dipping or falling tone can be shifted to the preceding noun when there is one: *Oto mïtá.* ("I saw a car") is pronounced *Otö mitá.*.

Syllable Structure

The syllable structure of Leonine strictly (C)V, where C stands for a consonant and V stands for a vowel or the /ai/ diphthong. If the /ai/ diphthong is followed by a vowel, it is resyllabified as /a.jV/ (where V is the vowel). Various vowel sequences are possible.

Sequences of a nasal vowel followed by another vowel are generally disallowed, and are normally transformed into /V.nV/ (where V V are non-nasal vowels). In spellings, apostrophes are used to break up ambiguous spellings (ex: /ao/ is written as "a'o").

The following syllables are not used outside of loanwords: /ti, t̪ʲᵝ, tu, di, d̪ʲᵝ, du, tse, tsa, tso, tsai, ji, wo, w̪ʲᵝ, wu/, plus long and nasal versions of these.

Prosody

The concept of stress doesn't apply very well to Leonine, but generally you could describe the process as a right-leaning accent on the last syllable of the word. The syllable rhythm is moraic.

Grammar

The Leonine language is morphologically rich. Morphological processes fall into two categories: supra-segmental (where a tone, long vowels/consonants or extra syllable boundaries are added), and agglutinative suffixing. It's not clear if the suffixes are independent words, clitics or true affixes.

Nouns

Leonine nouns are declined for number (singular, plural), qualified/possessive state (normal, qualified, implicitly possessed), and theme vs non-theme (roughly equivalent to accusative vs non-accusative case). Using the noun *oto* ("car") as an example, the following forms can be seen:

		Singular	Plural (definite)	Plural (indefinite)
Normal state	**Non-theme**	Oto	Otoe	Ootoo
	Theme	Otó	Otoé	Ootóo
Qualified	**Non-theme**			
	Theme			
Implicity possessed	**Non-theme**	Ótó	Ótoé	Ótotóo
	Theme			

(Note: nouns with a final acute accent are not written as such. Instead, the following word is not capitalized.)

Plural takes two forms: either an -e suffix (-ne if the noun ends in -e), or elongation of the vowels (generally only applied to the first two syllables). Ex: *oto* -> *otoe* or *ootoo*. The -e form is used in definite usages, and the lengthening form is used in more indefinite uses

when the noun is used more like a mass uncountable noun. In some cases where the number of a noun is truly indeterminate, or when the noun is qualified with an explicit numeral or obviously plural quantifier, plural marking is optional.

The qualified state indicates that a noun is further qualified by adjectives, possessive pronouns, possessive nouns, relative clauses, demonstratives (*nra*) etc., which are added after the noun. The qualified state is indicated by an absence of break in the intonation after the noun, which generally means that the last syllable takes a high tone. Ex: *oto* -> *oto me* (as opposed to *oto Me*).

By putting a noun in qualified state and adding a pronoun, you can form pronominal possessives:

Person	Example	Gloss
1st person singular	*oto me*	"my car"
2nd person singular	*oto ne/te*	"your car (singular)"
3rd person	*oto a*	"his/her/its/their car"
1st person plural	*oto mou*	"our car"
2nd person plural	*oto nou*	"your car (plural)"

The implicit possessive indicates that the noun has a pronominal possessor, and while the person is left implicit, most of the time it is the same as the verb subject. It is roughly equivalent to the changing "house" into "home", "father" into "dad" etc. It is indicated by giving a high tone to all the syllables (written as a high tone on the first syllable).

Nouns which are used as verbal theme (generally equivalent to the object in nominative-accusative languages) appear directly in front of the verb in the sentence, and are linked to the verb by removing the intonation break between the noun and the verb, which generally results in a high tone on the last syllable of the noun. This process is similar to verb incorporation, and the distinction often translates into a subject vs object distinction:

Noun Thematicity	Example	Gloss
Non-thematic	*Sente Doubu.*	"The body moves."
Thematic	*Sente doubu.*	"He moves his body."

Adjectives

Adjectives in Leonine are generally invariable, aside from intonation changes. They always follow the noun.

When used in noun phrases (as epithets), the intonation of the adjective depends on if there are further qualifiers applied to the noun - in which case there is no intonation break after the adjective and the last syllable generally has a high tone (and the next word is not written with an initial Capital letter). Ex: *oto hao me* (as opposed to *oto hao Me*).

When used with the verb *da* (to be) as an attribute, the adjective becomes a verbal theme and there is no intonation break either (so the verb *da* doesn't start with a Capital). In some sentences, this intonation change is meaningful:

Adjective Thematicity	Example	Gloss
Non-thematic	*Oto hao Da.*	"The good car is (like that)."
Thematic	*Oto Hao da.*	"The car is good."
Thematic	*Oto hao da.*	"It's a good car."

The adjective can be used as an adverb by adding the -ki suffix. This can be used either as a theme or not:

Adverbial Thematicity	Example	Gloss
Non-thematic	*Haoki Tsuté.*	"Well he/she/it/they did it!"
Thematic	*Haoki tsuté.*	"He/she/it/they did it well."

Verbs

Verbs in Leonine are compact and expressive. The verbal complex expresses the subject, object, second object, tense, mood a polarity of the action, in addition to various other distinctions (using auxiliaries). However, aspect is not an important distinction in Leonine and is generally left implicit. The verbal complex is made out of two parts:

Inner Core

The inner core is formed by the verb root and the verb tone, which indicates the verbal person (1st, 2nd or 3rd person) and core tenses (present, past or imperative). Along with the plural subject suffix (which is part of the outer section), the base verb conjugation forms a simple paradigm, which can be shown using the verb *mita* (see):

Subject	Present	Past	Imperative
1st person singular	*Mitä.* (I see)	*Mïtá.* (I saw)	
2st person singular	*Mità.* (You see)	*Mìtá.* (You saw)	*Míta!* (See!)
3rd person	*Mita.* (He/she/it/they see)	*Mitá.* (He/she/it/they saw)	

1st person plural	*Mitä you.* (We see)	*Mïtá you.* (We saw)	
2nd person plural	*Mità you.* (You(pl) see)	*Mìtá you.* (You(pl) saw)	*Míta you!* (See! (pl))

Some verbs have multiple forms. Examples:

Irregular negatives

Positive	Negative
Rai	Ra nai
Ya	Dja nai
Da	Nai

A lot of verbs have short and long forms. Generally the long forms are used for monosyllabic in the past tense with the 1st or 2nd person singular when no object pronouns or auxiliary verbs are present. Also, a hyper-long form can be formed by adding +te to the long form (or +ya for verbs already ending in -te). Hyper long forms are only used in the past tense in the settings where you'd use a long form and where there is no preceding thematic noun phrase. Verbs with 2 syllables generally have a normal form and a hyper-long form only. Verbs with 3 syllables or more generally never have a long or hyper-long form (since they are already long).

Short vs long forms

Short form	Long form	Hyper-long form	Gloss
Tsu	Tsute	Tsuteya	Make, do
Ha	Haya	Hayate	Have
Ya	Haya	Hayate	There is *
Ku	Iku	Ikute	Go
Shou	Shoubû	Shoubûte	Say
You	Youbû	Youbûte	Swim

Verbs that end in -ai form their long form in the past tense by breaking down the diphthong into individual syllables:

Ai verbs

Short form	Long form	Gloss
Rai /ɾaj/	Raí /ɾa.i/	Arrive, Arrived

Outer Section

The verb's outer section is made out of suffixes added after the verb. They include object pronouns, auxiliary verbs (including the negative auxiliary) and the 1st/2nd person subject pluralizer (*you*). Using *mita* as an example:

Object	Example	Gloss	Position
1st person singular	*Mita me.*	"He* sees me."	Before auxiliaries
2nd person singular	*Mita ne/te.*	"He* sees you."	Before auxiliaries
3rd person	*Mita (n)a.*	"He* sees him*."	*After auxiliaries and *you**
3rd person reflective	*Mita i.*	"He* sees himself*."	Before auxiliaries
1st person plural	*Mita mou.*	"He* sees me."	Before auxiliaries
2nd person plural	*Mita nou.*	"He* sees you(pl)."	Before auxiliaries

(* "He" can be replaced by "he/she/it/they" and so forth, since the 3rd person is not distinguished by gender or number.)

The 3rd person object pronoun "a" can generally be dropped and is usually implied by context. The pronouns a/i become na/ni if the verb ends in a/i respectively. A second object pronoun can be used: *Mita me a.* ("he sees mine") etc. This second object pronoun logically is always *a*. In trivalent verbs such as "to give", the first object is the recipient (benefactive), and the second object is the thing that is being given.

The verbal auxiliaries are added to form a wide variety of tenses, moods, voices, valency changes, and the negative. Here are the most common auxiliaries:

Auxiliary	Example	Gloss
ba	*Mïtá ba.*	"I was seen."
tsu	*Mitä tsu a.*	"I make him see."
ku	*Mitä ku.*	"I will see."
kai	*Mitä kai.*	"I'm starting to see."
hai	*Mitä hai.*	"I've stopped seeing."
rai	*Mitä rai.*	"I can see."
nai	*Mitä nai.*	"I don't see."

The auxiliary *rai* becomes *ra* when used in the negative: *Mita ra nai.* "I can't see". When an auxiliary in -ai is combined with -you (subject pluralizer), they are phonetically combined: *Mita rai you.* /mita ɾa joː/ ("They can see").

The second to last part of the outer section that can be added is a postposition. This adds an implicit locative argument to the verb: *Mitä ni.* ("I look in it/there."), *Mitä mae.* ("I look in front of it/forwards."), etc.

The last part is a conjunction which can form subordinate clauses: *Sikë Iki nai ka.* "I think he's not going". Conjunctions include *ka*, *dan*, *danra*. Some conjunctions can also be used sentence-initially, but the meaning is different.

Syntax

Nominal phrases

Leonine uses postpositions most of the time:

Oto ni. ("In the car")

Generally, the general oblique postposition 'ni' (at, to, in, using...) is by far the most common and other postpositions are only used when the location or movement has to be differentiated from the simple locative. Other postpositions can also be combined with 'ni':

Shaden ni da. ("It's in the store") *Shaden mae da.* ("It's in front of the store") *Shaden mae ni da.* ("It's in front of the store")

Sentence syntax

The sentence order is [Subject], [Theme], [Verb], [Complements]:

Kaichanen Oto doubú Shaden mae.

[Driver] [car] [moved] [store] [in-front-of]

"The driver moved the car in front of the store."

If an object is not a verb theme, it is placed after the verb:

Haoki käité Oto.

[Well] [I drove] [car]

"I drove the car well."

There can be multiple chained verb themes:

Zoubu san hä nai.

[Foot] [three] [I have] [not]

"I don't have three feet."

A prepositional phrase can be a verb theme:

Canada ni mïtá.

[Canada] [in] [I saw]

"I saw him/her/it/them in Canada."

Vocabulary

Example text

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